

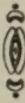
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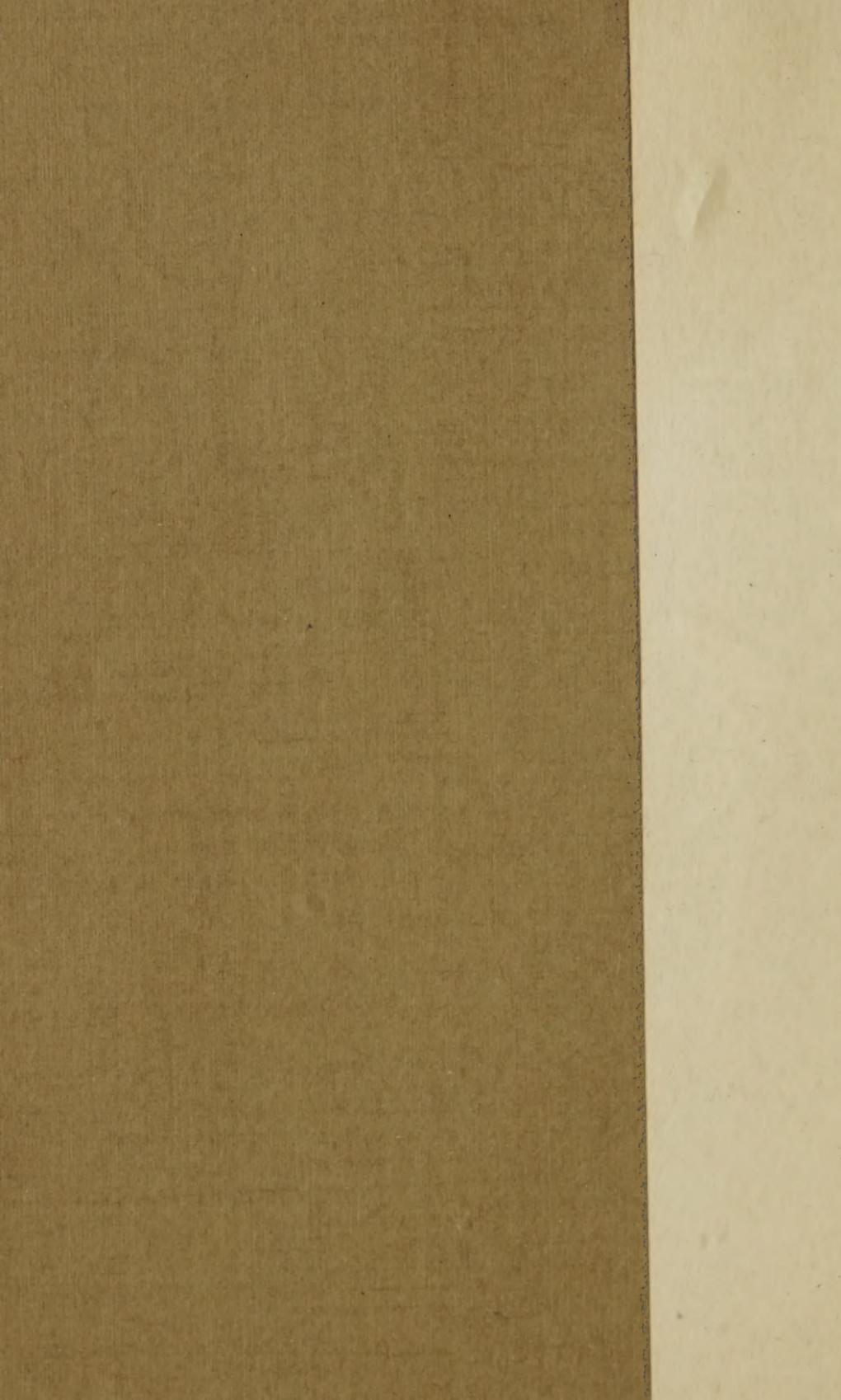
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In the presence of God

In the Presence
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Addresses given in St. Paul's Cathedral and Westminster
Abbey at St. Paulstide, January 26-28, 1926

With

Acts of Devotion used by the Congregation

Church of England. National
Assembly. Missionary Council

Issued for the Missionary Council by the
PRESS AND PUBLICATIONS BOARD OF
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1926

EXPLANATORY PREFACE

WHEN the Missionary Council was planning its Convention for St. Paulstide its first endeavour was that the devotional services should be the centre of the whole gathering, and that the large meetings in the Central Hall, Westminster, should be only in the second place. It was to be a Convention of solemn preparation and dedication to the service of God.

That this end was attained is owing to the earnest prayers of very many that the Holy Spirit of God would direct the whole Convention. It is altogether too sacred to attempt by any examples to show how strongly those who were responsible for the arrangements were aware that God Himself was showing the way.

It is the conviction of the Missionary Council that only through the maintenance of this spirit of waiting upon God's will, of listening to His voice, of self-dedication to His service, can the work that was then begun be carried forward

throughout the dioceses. And with this sense of the solemnity of these evening services, the Council ventures to offer them in a modified form, hoping that they may serve two purposes.

I. Those who have had most experience in the conduct of devotional gatherings were apprehensive of the attempt to realise the right spirit in such great buildings as St. Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey. They were sure that an atmosphere of silence was essential, and that to obtain it great care must be taken in the preparation of details. And because it is hoped that similar attempts will be made in other cathedrals and large churches, they think it will be found of service if they give some account of their preparation.

An evening and morning were given to a round table conference at the Bishop of Salisbury's Palace. It was then settled that the subjects of the addresses were to be progressive, ending on the third evening with resolves and acts of self-dedication. That every effort should be made to get the whole congregation kneeling well before the services began ; actually the time printed on the papers was fifteen minutes before that appointed for the conductor to go to the pulpit. That there should be no sound of

the organ whatever except to accompany the hymns, nor any choir. That there should be long periods of silence at intervals ; from three to five minutes, and occasionally from five to seven minutes. That each service should end in silence, and not with a hymn. That there should be no procession, or any of the normal accompaniments of a dignified service. What was aimed at was not a great cathedral service, but that we should all be of one mind and in one place, to realise the presence of God. That each service should last exactly one hour, and should be conducted by one man standing the whole time in the pulpit. And because it was known that this, which is happily realisable in a small gathering, would be very difficult in these large Houses of God, a paper was printed for each evening, containing an exact order of service, and stating the intervals for silence, naming the hymns to be sung, and giving a very brief summary of each address. Certain directed acts of devotion and intercession were printed, and any corporate acts of prayer, or conducted devotions with congregational responses, were also printed on the paper.

2. It has been suggested that many, who were not in London on those days, and who may not

be able to share in similar services of devotion in other diocesan centres, will wish to make these addresses the subject of their own meditations. They will also wish to use the acts of devotion privately or in small groups. It is hoped that this booklet may become a little volume of devotions in constant use during the few years in which the World Call is sounding throughout the parishes of England under diocesan organisation, and that so there may be an increasing voice of surrender and dedication of life to the God of the whole world.

March 1926.

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PART I

ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

E. S. WOODS, Hon. Canon of Ely.
J. B. SEATON, Hon. Canon of Christ Church.
THE LORD BISHOP OF BRADFORD.
THE LORD BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH.

Each address was divided into two parts. On the third day they were given by different persons. In the Acts of Devotion it will be seen at what point in the Service each of these addresses was given.

On the first day the Moslem World report had been presented ; on the second, the African and Indian reports ; on the third, the Far East report. Certain words in the addresses, and some of the devotional exercises, were intended to express thoughts that had been suggested during the day.

In the first address we think of God's purpose for the world, and of man's opportunity in co-operating with God in His purpose. He wills to use men and women in fulfilling that purpose. The second address considers the signs of the times, and we see that this is a Day of the Lord ; that He is calling, calling through the opportunity of which we have heard in the four reports. The third address presents the crisis of decision, not for our Church, nor for our diocese, but for ourselves. We must open our hearts to receive the very spirit of Jesus Himself.

THE PURPOSE OF GOD

INTRODUCTION

Our main object is not to talk about God, but together to speak to Him ; above all, to make an opportunity in which He can speak to us. If, in response to this tremendous challenge, the Church is to act, she must first listen and receive.

I

THE PURPOSE OF GOD

WE are a company of men and women who stake our all on the belief that for this seemingly chaotic world God has a Plan and a Purpose, and no lesser Purpose than that all men should be brought into fellowship with Himself, and that the kingdoms of this world should become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. We believe, with St. Paul, that “ the whole creation, sighing and throbbing with pain, waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.”

It is in Jesus Christ—Jesus in Bethlehem's manger, in the carpenter's shop at Nazareth, amidst the throngs of Galilee, on the green hill at Calvary, and in the Resurrection garden—it is in Him that we see the Purpose most plainly revealed. And—let me say it—if ever you lose sight of the Purpose it is the companionship of Jesus that will give it back to you again.

We trace the Purpose running all through history like a golden thread. And we see it to-day, in and behind the great world movements of our times. The main features of these movements are familiar. The shrinkage of the world into one neighbourhood, the economic interdependence of the people, the clash of colour, the interplay of the forces of nationalism and self-determination, the new contacts of different civilisations, the "renaissance" in Africa and the East—what does it all mean? You and I believe that this amazing state of affairs is not the chance result of blind forces, but is in some real sense an expression of the Purpose of God. It is intentional; it is providential; it is pregnant with possibilities for God's Kingdom of love and righteousness and peace.

That surely must be the thought in our minds as we read the Moslem Report. The ferment of thought in the world of Islam, the crumbling of what has for centuries seemed an

impenetrable wall, the new accessibility to the Gospel from Egypt to China, from the Black Sea to the sands of Arabia, the preservation through centuries of remnants of Christians in Persia, in Iraq, in Abyssinia, it all has only one meaning. God's hand has opened these doors. And He waits for His Church to enter. And the door will not stand open indefinitely.

At this moment, I do not ask you to think just yet of our response ; of what we, Christ's Church, have failed to do, of what we ought to do. I want you to grasp, with your whole mind, this thought of the great Plan of our Father God. Dwell on it ; God wills to have all created beings in fellowship with Himself : God's love is pressing into every corner of the Moslem world, is making a way for Islam to tread, a way that leads right into His Kingdom.

Pray that you and I and all Christ's Church may have eyes to see and hearts to apprehend — pray that we may one and all be lifted out of our littlenesses to identify ourselves wholly with the Father's eternal Purpose of redeeming love.

II

ON GOD'S CALL TO MEN TO CO-
OPERATE WITH HIS PURPOSE

THREE is a further fact about that Purpose which the Church always has to face, and which we of the Church of England are trying to face, with a new sincerity, to-day. It is that God depends upon man's co-operation in carrying out His plan of love for the world.

It is sheer truth, staggering to contemplate, that God, as He moves forward to achieve His immemorial Purpose, refuses to act apart from the human beings He has made. The whole missionary cause, the very advent of His Kingdom, is conditioned by this inescapable fact. Man is God's indispensable agent; he is the vehicle and instrument of omnipotence. Through all the long story of God and the human race, God is always asking for men. "I wondered that there was no man"—"Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" "Run ye to and fro thro' the city and see if ye can find a man." "How shall they hear without a preacher?" The Gospel is adequate enough. Christianity can save the world all right. There is nothing feeble or failing about God's love, about

Christ's redemptive life and death. The prerequisite is a human instrument. If God in Christ is to reach the hearts of men and mould the life of nations, He must do it through human beings—there is no other way.

Christ is always challenging His Society in this way. He did it when He was on earth. He has done it ever since, and He is doing it to-day. The final test of the Society is the nature of its answer to that challenge. That test is being applied to us in the Church of England to-day more stringently, more dramatically, than ever before in our long history. It is not enough to devise a successful form of self-government, to overhaul our machinery, to reform our finances, to revise our Prayer Book. These things, absorbing as they are, are simply means to render the Church a better instrument in God's hands. These things, and many others like them, we must take in our stride as we run to do the bidding of the Lord.

Look for a moment at the nature of the challenge that confronts us to-day. You and I can remember the time, not so very long ago, when the burden of much of our missionary praying was, "O Lord, Open the shut doors that the Gospel may enter in." To-day, all over the world, all the doors are open. Even the Moslem world, which so recently seemed a hopeless proposition from the point of view

of Christian propaganda, is accessible to-day in practically every part. The world has always needed Christ, and many of the mental and material obstacles which kept Christ out have been levelled to the ground. The whole position is indeed without parallel in the history of the Christian cause.

And what of the Church and this unprecedented challenge? Ah—that is where the story comes very near to tragedy. In the face of the greatest chance the Church has ever had to co-operate with God's Purpose, it seems smitten with something very like impotence. Neither men nor money are forthcoming on anything like an adequate scale. Missionary societies, owing to lack of means, are holding back qualified men and women who are ready to go out, and on the other hand there are nothing like enough offers of service from the rank and file of the Church to meet the demands of the front. This—the unprecedented demand abroad and the disastrous shortage at home—is the crux of this Convention, and of the whole situation in the Church and the world to-day. With these Reports before us any remaining vestige of excuse for inaction is swept away. At any rate the Church cannot say, Church people cannot say, "I never knew, nobody ever told me of the gigantic need and opportunity." We know now, even if we didn't

fully know before. The acid question is whether or no this knowledge is going to issue in action.

“Whether or No.” There can be a No, as there has often in the past been No from the Church to Christ’s demands. There is no compulsion. There are no thunderbolts from heaven to make us listen, nor signs in the sky to make us see. All God’s men are volunteers, and He knows no force but the force of love. If a man, if a Church, refuses, the refusal is accepted, and another will be offered the task. Let us face this: it is an inexorable law. Pray God our Church may not incur the awful sentence, “I will remove thy candlestick out of its place.”

But, please God, the Church’s answer shall be Yes, not No. Please God we are going to make the beginning of a new and better stage, when, with new courage and new passion, our own Church and our sister Churches shall rise up, like a nation roused by war, and plunge headlong into the task of giving God to the world.

What will it mean? You and I hardly know. Neither we nor any one else has ever seen a Church really respond, through all its corporate life, to the Call of God. It may mean a drastic change of values. It may upset many of our preconceived ideas about Church life and Church work. It may put

the first last and the last first. It is certain to mean caring much more about Jesus Christ, thinking with His mind and acting by His standards. And it must mean the Cross. Jesus Himself, when on earth, stuck at nothing, not even death, to make men see what Love means and what God is. It will have to suffer. You cannot give men God without suffering. But in its redemptive suffering it will find a new joy : there is no joy like the joy of sacrifice. It will count all things but loss—prestige, dignity, material goods, prejudices, preoccupations, shibboleths—it will count all these things loss, if only it can give Christ to a world that needs Him.

CONCLUSION

I only want to add one more word before we fall to prayer again. There is something overwhelming about the happenings of these days, and it is hard not to be oppressed by a sense of impotence. One wonders where the spiritual power is to be found which shall work a miracle in the Church. Now I want to say humbly but firmly, that there is no insurmountable difficulty about power. There is no need to lash ourselves into passionate petitions for power. I sometimes feel there is danger of grave unreality in prayer to God to pour out His Spirit, to send forth His power,

and so on. There is no necessity for these frantic beseechings. Like the electrical waves all about us that are waiting for the wireless receivers, the power is there all the time, instantly available for any person, or group of persons, who will quietly set about doing what God wants done. "God is all round us, a breaking sea of love and truth and power, and all we have to do is to let Him in." His power, the very power that raised Jesus from the dead, is at the disposal of any Church that will corporately embark on the Great Adventure—the adventure of making Jesus really supreme in its own fellowship, the adventure of following His way in a world estranged from Him, the adventure of dying that He may live and reign throughout the globe.

Are you and I ready for that? Are we prepared to go back to our dioceses and tell our fellow Churchmen that we have seen Jesus afresh and have heard Him speak to us, and that we want them to join us in a new and wonderful adventure for Him? Why not? May we not go out from here and expect to see a glorious revival of Life in ourselves, in our Diocese, and throughout the whole Church?

Acts of Devotion

1. *An Act of Worship.*

V. There were great voices in Heaven, saying,
The Kingdoms of this world are become the
kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ, and He
shall reign for ever and ever.

O God, who hast made all things by Thy
power, Thou King and Ruler of the world,
glorious in Beauty, and Truth and Love :

R. Thine is the kingdom, and the power and
the glory, for ever and ever.

V. O God, who hast shown us the glory of
Thy Kingdom in the royal love of Jesus Christ :

R. Thine is the kingdom, and the power and
the glory, for ever and ever.

V. O God, who art ever working in the world
by Thy mighty and creative Spirit, to manifest
Thy kingdom among men :

R. Thine is the kingdom, and the power and
the glory, for ever and ever.

V. O God, more wonderful in Thy perfection
than all that we can ever desire or know :

R. Thine is the kingdom, and the power and
the glory, for ever and ever.

O God, who searchest the hidden secrets of
the heart, satisfy, we beseech Thee, our deep
unspoken longings ; open our eyes to the glory
and beauty of Thyself, and enable us by Thy
Spirit to apprehend Thy purposes ; through
Jesus Christ our Lord.

2. *Meditate in silence on the purpose of God.*

God's purpose of love for the world—
revealed in Christ, in history, in modern

world movements, in the present conditions and opportunities in the Moslem world (see p. 15).

3. *Acts of Thanksgiving.*

Thanks be to Thee, most glorious God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for the revelation of Thyself in this our world, and for Thy great purpose of love for all mankind.

V. Praise the Lord, O my soul ;

R. And all that is within me praise His Holy Name.

We thank Thee that Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion endureth through all ages.

V. Praise the Lord, O my soul ;

R. And all that is within me praise His Holy Name.

We thank Thee for many signs of the fulfilling of Thy purpose in our day and generation.

V. Praise the Lord, O my soul ;

R. And all that is within me praise His Holy Name.

We thank Thee for this day of opportunity in which we live, for the invigorating sense that all things are being made new, and that it is given to us to make traditions, as well as to uphold them.

V. Praise the Lord, O my soul ;

R. And all that is within me praise His Holy Name.

We thank Thee for all who in every generation have seen and have served Thy purpose.

V. Praise the Lord, O my soul ;

R. And all that is within me praise His Holy Name.

4. Acts of Affirmation.

Let us re-affirm our faith in God's purpose.

Jesus said, I am come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly.

God willeth that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.

They shall come from the East and West and from the North and South, and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God.

The kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ.

R. Lord, I believe ; help Thou my unbelief.

5. Petitions.

Let us in humble confidence pray to God for the fulfilling of His loving purpose in the world of our day.

Let us pray that the Love of God may break down barriers and touch men's hearts in every land.

V. Lord, hear our prayer :

R. And let our cry come unto Thee.

Let us pray that Christ crucified may draw many souls in heathen and Moslem lands to Himself.

V. Lord, hear our prayer :

R. And let our cry come unto Thee.

Let us pray that the nations may learn to live the Family Life of the Kingdom of God.

V. Lord, hear our prayer :

R. And let our cry come unto Thee.

Let us pray that our own nation and Commonwealth may set itself to learn and serve the purpose of God.

V. Lord, hear our prayer :

R. And let our cry come unto Thee.

Let us pray that the Church may be led to respond to the great opportunity now open in Moslem lands, especially in Egypt, Persia, and Palestine.

Let us pray that in Africa the growing Churches may become strong in the faith, and may become missionaries to their own Moslem people.

Let us pray that God will abundantly bless the efforts to win the Moslem world through literature.

Let us pray that doctors and nurses may be found to staff the Medical Missions among the Moslems.

Let us pray that the whole Church of Christ may see with fresh eyes and serve with new zeal the Eternal Purpose of God.

V. Lord, hear our prayer :

R. And let our cry come unto Thee.

V. O Saviour of the world, who by Thy cross and passion hast redeemed us :

R. Save us and help us, we humbly beseech Thee, O Lord.

6. *Prayers.*

O God, without whom our wisdom is folly, and our far-seeing blindness, we beseech Thee that from the glory that is Thine, the power of love may beat upon all our doors and break in, to overcome our evil. O Thou, that art Lord and King of every land and tongue, grant that it may be given to us to see Thy Kingdom nigh at hand. We ask it through Him that is Thy love made manifest, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Bless us, O God, with the vision of Thy Being and Thy Purpose, that in the joy of Thy strength we may work without haste

and without sloth ; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

7. Meditate in silence on God's call to men to co-operate with His purpose.

God and the Church : His need of human instruments to execute His Purpose. Christ's challenge to the Church for a new Response to a new Call. He bids us listen and act and suffer. "Power"—the same power that raised Christ from the dead—available for any Church that will take up this challenge (see p. 18).

8. Thanksgivings.

For the joy of being called to know and to serve Thy Purpose of Love ;

R. We thank Thee, O God.

That always and everywhere Thou dost satisfy the longing soul and fill the hungry soul with goodness ;

R. We thank Thee, O God.

For the joy of sharing the life of Christ with those who need Him ;

R. We thank Thee, O God.

For the wonder of Thy love and grace and wisdom, everywhere stirring men's hearts and minds ;

R. We thank Thee, O God.

For all who at any time have recalled the Church to her great task of evangelising the World ;

R. We thank Thee, O God.

For those who have gone forth to the ends of the world with the joyful news, and have sought out the dark places of the earth to bring light to them that dwell in the shadow of death ;

R. We thank Thee, O God

For the renewal of life in Thy Church, for the joyous expectancy of better things, for the quickening of our hope, and for the promised vision of Thy Glory ;

R. We thank Thee, O God.

9. *Acts of Penitence.*

Let us of the Christian Society confess with shame and sorrow how grievously we have failed to see and to serve God's purpose, and to set forth, by life and by word, His Love in the midst of the sons of men. Let us earnestly repent and be heartily sorry for this our failure, and especially for our lack of love and unity within the Church, and for our selfish forgetfulness of the needs of the world.

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men ; We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we, from time to time, most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against Thy divine Majesty, provoking most justly Thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings ; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us, the burden of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father, for Thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past ; and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please Thee in newness of life, to the honour and glory of Thy Name ; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of His great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto Him ; have mercy upon us ; pardon and deliver us from all our

sins ; confirm and strengthen us in all goodness ; and bring us to everlasting life ; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

10. *Petitions.*

Let us pray that the whole Church may set itself afresh to serve God's Purpose and respond to His challenge ;

R. *Hear us, we beseech Thee.*

That the Church may see the whole world's need of Christ, and may be ready for any sacrifice in order to make Him known to all mankind ;

R. *Hear us, we beseech Thee.*

That the Church may learn to pray as Christ prayed and taught His disciples to pray ;

R. *Hear us, we beseech Thee.*

That the Church may be willing at whatever cost to follow and to bear witness to the way of Christ as she learns it ;

R. *Hear us, we beseech Thee.*

That the whole Church, and especially the Church of England may desire and experience a new unity in Christ ;

R. *Hear us, we beseech Thee.*

That the witness of the Church in the moral questions of our day may truly reflect the mind of God, and may be known and felt throughout the world ;

R. *Hear us, we beseech Thee.*

That a great number of men and women may offer themselves unreservedly to do Christ's work at home and abroad in our generation ;

R. *Hear us, we beseech Thee.*

For the removal of all hindrances in our own lives to the manifestation of God's redeeming love and power ;

R. *Hear us, we beseech Thee.*

II. Prayers.*Prayer for Fellowship.*

We beseech Thee, O Lord, to set our feet in a large place, where hearts are made pure from sin by faith in Thee, where faces are turned to the light, where all are one in Thee and no narrow domestic walls between man and man destroy the unity which Thou hast made in the Spirit of Thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayer for Peace and Power.

May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has called us into the fellowship of His Spirit, make us strong and tranquil in the truths of His promises ; and may His power be manifest in the meetings and services of this week to the illuminating of His Church in every part of the world, now and always.

Prayer for Courage.

Grant, O Lord, that we may be filled with a gallant and undaunted spirit, and be diffusers of life, invigorating all we meet ; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A Prayer of Consecration.

O God, set our hearts at liberty from the service of ourselves, and let it be our meat and drink to do Thy will ; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

An Act of Dedication.

Here, O Lord, we offer and present unto Thee yourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice ; humbly beseeching Thee that Thou wilt accept this our offering and use us for the work of Thy Kingdom,

and the making known of Thy love to all mankind ; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

[*It is possible that pages 24-32 will be found useful for a general service of intercession in church. They can easily be adapted to such use, if the conductor will add to section 5 a few petitions for Africa, India, and the Far East, chosen from other parts of this book. Before sections 2 and 7 short addresses could be given, followed by five minutes of silent prayer. Having this purpose in mind, the following suggestions may be noted, based on what was done in St. Paul's Cathedral. A hymn was sung at the beginning and also before section 7. There were short periods of silence after the first hymn and after sections 3, 4, and 5 ; after the second address and after section 9. The congregation said together the prayer at the end of section 1, followed by the Lord's Prayer ; the acts of affirmation (section 4) ; the prayers of section 6 ; the acts of penitence (section 9) ; and the prayers of section 11. They stood for the closing act of dedication ; and the service ended with the benediction from Heb. xiii. 20, 21. There was a brief silence between each prayer of section 11.]*

THE DAY OF THE LORD

INTRODUCTION

“ The Lord is in His holy temple ; let all the earth keep silence before Him.” It is in silence that great things fashion themselves together. Let us set ourselves in thought at the side of the prophet in the temple. The walls of the earthly house fall away ; the veils are drawn aside ; and he sees the Glory of the Living God. “ I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up above the whole earth, and His train, the skirts of His glory, filled the temple. Above Him stood the seraphim ; each one had six wings ; with twain he covered his face, because the glory was dazzling ; and with twain he covered his feet, to hide their imperfection ; and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another and said, ‘ Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God of hosts ; the whole earth is full of His glory.’ ”

Let us lift up our hearts in worship before the Majesty and Holiness of God.

But the Lord of heaven does not remain in solitary glory. He is Lord of earth : His delight is with the sons of men : He rules in

the kingdoms of men and directs their issues—He longs to win the hearts of men to Himself.

Once again, with the prophet we hear the voice out of the glory—

“ And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send ? and who will go for us ? ”

I

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

THE call came to us as a nation last Armistice tide that in the silence before God we should try to understand. And our people—and not our own people only—were given an understanding heart with an effective will towards peace. It was, in fact, a great sacramental moment in which God met us, as we bent our heads and laid open our hearts and offered our wills. May the memory of it never pass away.

And now again, another call has come to us as a Church to try to understand the mystery of God’s Will, “ the hope of our calling.” Again it is, as it were, a great sacramental moment when from all over England we are all together of one accord in one place—and that place this—the Church of the great missionary Apostle—before God in silent

thought and prayer. In our meetings day by day we are being given an understanding ; the light is searching through us ; in our prayers we must seek that God will give us, and the Church through us, an effective will to sacrifice.

For it is the day of opportunity and only a Church which pours itself out upon the altar can take it. Of the opportunity and its glory we will think later.

Well, there are many “ signs of the times.” At this stage I would ask you to reflect on one of them, for our purpose the most important. It is best thought of in Church, it escapes the notice of the outsider ; it doesn’t get into the papers ; but it will give us the courage and hope that we need ; for it comes not from ourselves, but from God. “ The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He shall show them His covenant.” It is just this—be certain of it—that underneath the surface of a confused and disordered world, God is taking action in the hearts of men by His Spirit. You know how it was that in the long days of war and in the days of disappointment since the war a cold doubt had chilled the hearts of many and sapped their nerve. God had seemed to be powerless to save ; He had seemed to cease to act. But how do we expect Him to act ? He can only act in human life through us, through His

Church, the Body of His dear Son, only through wills and hearts surrendered in Christ. Once in time we know that He acted by the Man born into the world, Christ Jesus, Whose heart and will were wholly given to His obedience. And the world has been different since. For ever since that day He has been acting through men and women whom the Spirit of the same Jesus brings to the same obedience. And when there are any who give themselves with all their hearts to God's purpose of love as revealed in Jesus Christ, then God revives His work in the midst of the years.

And that is happening now. It is one of the mysteries wrought in silence, this traffic of God with the souls of men, in the deep of the heart by the power of the living God. What is the meaning of all the currents of goodwill and peaceableness which have at last been released in the sea of the world's life? of all the feeling after God, if haply they might find Him, going on to-day? Why is it that so many are seeking to be taught how to pray? Why is there this world-wide sense that for the healing of the nations there is no competitor in the field save Jesus Christ? Why all the appeal that the world can only be re-shaped aright on His plan? Why is it that non-Christian peoples are judging Christians by His Law? Why is it that a

simple call to pray for the things which are dear to the heart of God meets with such an immediate and widespread response ? What is the meaning of the strong spiritual purpose of so many of the young, and why are so many of us older ones growing young in hope again ? What is the meaning of the movements stirring the life of the Church itself ? The signs are all round us. Isn't it that the Spirit of the Living God is moving upon the face of the waters and that God is in action as in the days of old, because He has brought us to want Him and to know that we need Him ? Surely there is a purpose. It is this : God is preparing our hearts that we may act with Him in the name of Christ for the salvation of the world.

Read then this sign of the times, and why the sign is given. "I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send ? and who will go for us ? "

II

THE DAY OF THE LORD

THE call of God is heard in the heart. But it is directed to the heart through events. The events and movements of history disclose His will. Our Lord warns us that we must

know the time of our visitation. Such a time is this. It is a day of the Lord. God is speaking through the events of the world to-day. The world is calling—calling to the Church of Christ. You have heard the voices from the Moslem World, from India, from Africa, you will hear the voices from the East. What Christian can hear those voices unmoved? The cry for Christian education in Africa, and the opportunity offered by enlightened Government; the call for reinforcements to strengthen the forces which hold the strategic lines of advance into that great, once mysterious, now open, continent; the appeal for the Spirit of Christ to reconcile white and black. And from India, the cry of the village people beating at the Church's doors for entrance; the call for workers to stop retreat, and more, to secure advance through the open doors. And from the Moslem World, a heart-shaking appeal which shames the Church of Christ for its neglect—so little attempted, so little venture of faith, and an opportunity (for a few years anyway) so rich in hope.

It was into a very dim, far-off shadowy world that the first disciples of the Lord Jesus ventured—with great joy in their hearts, but not knowing. How different for His disciples to-day! The whole world is at our doors; we cannot keep it out; it has pushed in. Its

problems mix with our daily domestic affairs. We have not to search and find out what it wants ; we know ; it tells us ; it wants what we can give of Christ's truth and power, if only we will give it. And it wants it now, without delay.

The day of the Lord may be the day of doom to a Church which professes the name of Christ. It has been said that the study of Church History is a cordial for drooping spirits ; so it is, in part ; because even in dark days God has not left Himself without a witness, and His Blessed Spirit has given many times of refreshing. But also I own that there is many a page in Church History which humbles to the dust, because the men and women who make the Church have so often failed Him. It was in great part because the Church was torn by theological disputes that Islam trampled over the world, and is what it has been ever since and is to-day. That is a warning to make us order our ways in fear. For brother still goes to law against brother, whilst the world is calling for our united help. Can't we decide this week to stop the clamorous voices which divide us, can't we decide to burn up our domestic strife in one great passionate and sustained blaze of sacrificial love ?

But before the day of the Lord becomes a day of doom, it is the day of glorious

opportunity, when God gives us the chance. "Given the existence of vital Christian work, Islam does not stand a chance with the African." "Given a supply of Christian workers, Africa may be won for Christ." "Given a large enough reinforcement, the outcastes of India may be gathered into the Church of Christ, and who can tell what the effect on India may be?" Those are the facts—among many others. And the question for us is not : Can Africa really become Christian ? Can Islam really be evangelised ? Can India really give its heart to Christ ? But can the Church at home rise to the splendid opportunity ? Can it rise up in gladness to give ? There is no need to be daunted by the immense demands on the Home Church which have been revealed. It is not beyond our power to meet them, if we will. We have here but five loaves and a few small fishes ; what are they among so many ? Jesus said, "Make the men sit down." Let us give what we have and up to the measure of our strength. God can multiply the gift. It is hard to believe that with God stirring the heart of the Church, and particularly moving the heart of the young in these days—when we are expecting some new thing—it will not come to pass. It is hard to believe that when we offered a few years back all we had to save the nation's life, we

will not offer now all we have to save the world. Anyhow, God asks it of us. Is not that the occasion of great joy? Should we not lift up our hearts and thank God that He has brought us to this hour? Now is the accepted hour. Now is the day of salvation.

This is the day which the Lord hath made. We will rejoice and be glad in it.

Acts of Devotion

1. *Direct the thoughts to God “the High and Holy One, inhabiting eternity,” and “ruling in the kingdom of men.”*

Place yourself in thought at the side of the prophet in the temple (see p. 35 for the suggested meditation).

Then say this prayer :

Blessed and only Potentate, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, Whom no man hath seen or can see, yet in Whom we believe ; unto Thee be the honour and power everlasting.

Now consider that the Lord of heaven is also Lord of earth (see p. 35).

“I heard the Voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send ? and who will go for us ?”

Keep silence.

2. *Prayers.*

O Lord, Who hast made Thy Church to be the minister of Thy will, touch me, Thy unworthy servant, with the fire from Thine altar ; cleanse my heart and enlighten my understanding that I may not only know what Thou wouldest have me to do, but also may have grace and power faithfully to perform the same, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

God, Who didst teach the hearts of Thy faithful people, by the sending to them the light

of Thy Holy Spirit ; grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in His holy comfort, through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end.

3. *Meditate in silence on the signs of the times.*

The evidence of God's living power in the fresh stirring of the hearts of men, their feeling after God, the release of the Spirit of Christ, the recognition of Christ's way as the only way, the preparation of the Church's mind to attend to the declaration of God's will (see p. 36).

4. *Acts of Prayer—with short intervals of silence.*

Hear the word of our Lord :

Jesus said, Have faith in God. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou taken up and cast into the sea ; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he saith cometh to pass, he shall have it.

Again, I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done unto them of My Father, which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them.

Make an act of faith in God, and His readiness to answer prayer in our Lord's Name.

Lord, I believe ; help Thou my unbelief.

(i) That the hearts of the members of the Church may be enlightened to read the signs of the times.

(ii) For Africa :

(a) For the increase of true wisdom and

justice to the white people in Africa in their attitude to the twin problems of race and industry.

- (b) That the Church of Christ may enter in at the open door offered in the work of educating the African peoples.
- (c) "The strategic points of advance into Africa are all occupied by the Missions of our Church." That these may be held and reinforced.
- (d) That the Church as a whole may offer itself in sacrifice for the sake of Africa.

(For immediate needs : 120 men and 80 women and an additional £60,000 per annum ; in the future : 80 men and 60 women annually.)

(iii) For India :

- (a) For the Government of India in its difficult problems.
- (b) That India may find in Christ the end and satisfaction of her spiritual quest and the healing of her wounds.
- (c) That the Church may have power to rise to the opportunities of the Mass Movements among the village people.
- (d) That the Church as a whole may offer itself as a sacrifice for India's sake.

(For 60 missionary recruits this year : 40 every year after ; 50 extra workers for Mass Movement areas—priests, doctors, nurses, teachers ; £50,000 additional annual income ; £20,000 special fund for Mass Movement areas.)

O God, our refuge and strength, Who art the author of all godliness ; Be ready, we beseech Thee, to hear the devout prayers of Thy Church ;

and grant that those things which we ask faithfully we may obtain effectually ; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

5. *Meditate in silence on the Day of the Lord.*

The voice of God in the world opportunity of to-day, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do ?" (see p. 39).

6. *An act of worship for that God has made known His will.*

Great and marvellous are Thy works, O Lord God the Almighty ; righteous and true are Thy ways, O King of the ages. Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify Thy Name ? For Thou only art holy ; for all the nations shall come and worship before Thee ; for Thy righteous acts have been made manifest.

7. *Silence for consideration.*

That God may show me what He would have me do ;

That He would give me courage ; and the power to witness, to work, and to sacrifice ;

That He would fill me with the deep and joyful sense that what He asks of me, I shall by His Spirit be able to perform.

O Almighty and most merciful God, of Thy bountiful goodness keep us, we beseech Thee, from all things that may hurt us ; that we, being ready both in body and soul, may cheerfully accomplish those things that Thou wouldest have done ; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Almighty and everlasting God, give unto us

the increase of faith, hope, and charity ; and, that we may obtain that which Thou dost promise, make us to love that which Thou dost command ; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Our Father.

LORD, WHAT WILT THOU
HAVE ME TO DO?

INTRODUCTION

To-night we come to the crisis of decision for ourselves. Let us begin, then, by asking silently, each in his own heart, for a spirit of holy fear, conscious of the Presence of God—and after a few moments of silence invoke upon our knees the Holy Spirit, that He may search our hearts, lighten them with celestial fire, bring home to us our past failures, cleanse us from secret sins of insincerity, half-heartedness, and self-will, and open our hearts to receive the very Spirit of Jesus Himself.

I

THE SPIRIT OF JESUS

LISTEN to three questions of St. Paul :

(a) Think of Saul on the road to Damascus. Suddenly there shone round about him a light out of heaven, and he fell upon the earth and heard a voice saying unto him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" And he said, "Who art Thou, Lord?"

A Jew, a Pharisee, prejudiced to the core against Jesus of Nazareth, whom he considered an impostor, a blasphemer against God, a subverter of all religion, as he knew it—arrested, turned completely inside out, transformed from a rigid traditionalist into a revolutionary force. By what? By whom? “I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest.” Crucified, yes—but for you. Risen for you. Ready to impart my Spirit to you.

What an amazing power is here pictured! What overwhelming force in that Person of Jesus! In His Spirit thus displayed! And we are familiar with the result. Never again did Paul doubt the reality of that Living God; the Spirit of Jesus possessed him completely. “Necessity is laid upon me—yea, woe is me if I preach not the Gospel.” He is tortured, overwhelmed, humiliated at the sight of a world indifferent to the love of God—“the wealth of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you the hope of Glory.”

We, too, have come again to a great crisis in our lives. We have been arrested by a great Light and a great Voice. Shall we too once again ask the question, “Who art Thou, Lord?” and hear that Voice, “I am Jesus,” crucified, risen, ascended—present.

There is no substitute for the Missionary passion—the devotion of one constrained by the love of Jesus.

(b) A second question.

"Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Jesus answered, "Arise, stand upon thy feet; go into the city; I send thee."

And Saul, not disobedient to the heavenly vision, arose, went into the city—and then Ananias was sent to him with the message: "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way which thou camest, hath sent me that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost." Obedience is the condition of power.

If we have the secret of the amazing transformation of the Apostle in the answer to his first question—which makes the encounter on the road to Damascus a turning point in the world's history—here we have the secret of the condition of power: Instant obedience to the prompting of God's Voice. What is He saying to each one of us?

"Arise, stand upon thy feet," play the man. I appoint thee a minister and witness of the things wherein thou hast seen Me—and of future revelations. At home—in daily life, do the next thing—as God prompts. Is He calling us to give up some habit, some luxury? To give more time to prayer? To exorcise the spirit of class or party? To imitate Christ in common daily drudgery? To take up His Cross and follow Him? Are we witnessing to our experience of Him in our life?

“Arise, go into the city.” Is your business with your fellow-men done as He wills? Is He a partner in the concern? Are my social relations all that He would like? My contact with others inspired by Him? “It shall be told thee,” if we will obey.

“I send thee.” Have we heard God’s call to offer for the world overseas, and held back for comfort’s sake? because of some home circumstances?

(c) A third question. It is that of St. Paul to some immature Christians in Ephesus.

“Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye became believers?” Not merely been baptised and confirmed—not merely become regular communicants, but received Him into our very hearts, so that He guides, forbids, strengthens, recalls to us Christ’s sayings, leads us into His truth?

It is a question of our will to be filled. We can keep Him out. Are we afraid of letting Him in, into every department of our life? Are we trying to keep back part of the price?

Shall we on our knees face right up to these three questions here and now?

Who art Thou, Lord?

Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?

Have I received the Holy Ghost?

II

YE SHALL BE MY WITNESSES

THE facts of the situation have been presented in the four reports. We have heard a call. Here we are to face the inner meaning of the facts, the purpose of God, and the urgency and personal demand of it. We have to make our response. In the stillness of His Presence, we ask ourselves, "What is His will for us now and henceforth?" We find the answer in the great permanent obligation laid upon us all, "Ye shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judæa and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth."

(a) Take the "uttermost parts of the earth" first. A few of our number may be called to witness overseas. It is the chief underlying demand of our time—but it comes mainly to the younger amongst us. This witness means the offer of a life—a career—to be lived in the service of non-Christians in such wise that they may see Jesus in human life, however imperfectly. There will be some whom Christ will thus be calling out, "Am I willing, if it is I?" "Lord, here am I; if it be Thy will, send me."

To parents the call may mean the greater sacrifice. Can you pray, "Lord, if it be Thy will, send my child"? Will you pray, "Lord, if it be Thy will, make me ready to send my child"?

(b) For most of us God's purpose is restricted to Jerusalem and Samaria—here again all that is meant by witness for Christ differs much.

It may mean the offer of the intellect, the intellectual effort to master the facts of the world situation by careful study of the four reports and in other ways, so that we may be potent advocates in the cause of the Kingdom, that we may see what is involved in the different countries in the way of education—social development, political guidance, direction of commercial issues.

It may mean the offer of a high standard of zealous and conscientious service amongst Christian people who have grown accustomed to ease and self-indulgence in their religion and resent interference from those whom they regard as too earnest or too narrow. Many of us have to attain, and then to inspire others with higher and truer standards of duty and sacrifice.

Sacrifice! It must mean the offer of an example of sacrifice in our own lives. The work of Christ throughout the world is held up, because Christ's friends are not sufficiently

devoted to release the money which they hold in trust. Our Chairman told us at our first meeting that we were not taking part in a convention but a vigil before a campaign. The aim of the reports is not only to arouse interest—they are a call to action. There is a challenge to larger achievement, and achievement for Christ always involves cost. The Kingdom which was initiated by the sufferings and passion of our Lord can only be carried forward through sacrifice now on the part of His disciples. Are we prepared for this? In our Parishes? It means adopting "first things first" as a carefully thought-out policy—definite efforts to teach all communicants the meaning of living Churchmanship—witness for Christ at home and to the uttermost parts of the earth. It means parishes being inspired by the Spirit of Him who came "not to be ministered unto but to minister." Are we ready to pay the cost in our own lives? If we are going to call forth sacrifice from others we must stand on the firm ground of experience in sacrifice. It may be true of some of us that at one time or another in our lives we have made sacrifices for Christ in the past, but how easy it is as the years go by to live more easily and to endure hardness less!

The call is to offer a living sacrifice—definite and practical—the more prudent and

careful spending of money that we may give more to Christ ; the costly endeavour to witness to the world's needs and Christ's will, and to enlist the help of others.

And for all this there will be need of a foundation of prayer and intercession, on, for most of us, a new scale. The measure of our power to call forth prayer is ultimately the character of our own secret prayer life. Through prayer we gain vision of Christ and His purposes—for the world, the Church, our parishes and ourselves. “ If chosen men had never been alone amid deep silence, open-browed to God, no greatness ever had been dreamed or done.” Through prayer we live in fellowship with Christ, by which alone we have the needed faith and courage and strength. Through prayer our witness gains new power. “ Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto Me.” Through prayer alone will come the revival of spiritual life in the Church. Then the tides of God's power will rise around us and flow through us—then the wonderful works of God will be accomplished.

Are we ready to submit our lives afresh to Christ ? to learn His Will ? to do His Will ? to pay the cost of whatever it may be ?

Acts of Devotion

1. *Silence in the Presence of God, asking for a spirit of holy fear.*

Invoke the Holy Spirit that He may be the Searcher of the heart, the Illuminator of the conscience, bringing home the knowledge of past failure, insincerity, half-heartedness, and self-will.

2. *Meditate in silence on the Spirit of Jesus.*

Three questions of St. Paul :

Who art Thou, Lord ?

Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do ?

Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye became believers ? (See p. 51.)

3. *Lay before God in silence :*

The world's need of Christ, and Christ's need of the world.

The Divine supply, and ourselves His instruments.

Teach us, good Lord, to serve Thee more faithfully,

To give and not to count the cost ;

To fight and not to heed the wounds ;

To toil and not to seek for rest ;

To labour and not to ask for any reward,

Save that of knowing that we do Thy will,

O Lord, our God. Amen.

My God shall supply all your need according to His riches by Christ Jesus.

Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think,

according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be the glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever.

4. Consider the implications of self-offering.

“ Ye shall be My witnesses.”

(a) Unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Am I willing, if it is I ?

Am I willing, if it be God’s will, to give my child ?

(b) In Jerusalem, Judæa, and Samaria.

The witness of intellectual effort.

The witness of a high standard of duty and service in parochial life, in individual life.

The witness of sacrifice.

The essential place of prayer.

Submit life afresh to Christ ; to learn His will, to do His will, to pay the cost whatever it may be (see p. 55).

5. Three Resolutions.

(1) Led as I believe by the Spirit, I resolve to join in this movement of prayer for a revival of the spiritual life in the Church of England, and to give the subject a definite place daily in my prayer.

(2) Believing that God seeks for my personal service, I hold myself bound to study the facts and the moral issues presented by the world situation of our time, that I may be reasonably equipped as a witness for Jesus Christ.

(3) Trusting only to His Grace, I offer myself, my mind, heart and will in God’s service for the extension and establishment of His Kingdom upon earth.

6. *Prayer.*

Almighty God, Who through Thine only-begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life ; We humbly beseech Thee, that, as by Thy special grace preventing us Thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by Thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect ; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end.

Resolution (1) on page 60 requires for its understanding a leaflet that was in the hands of all the members of the Convention. A copy of it may be obtained from the Missionary Council (1d. post free). In ordering it, ask for the Jerusalem Chamber Prayer Paper.

PART II

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

V. F. STORR, Canon of Westminster.
FRANCIS UNDERHILL.
CYRIL HEPHER, Canon of Winchester.
THE LORD BISHOP OF SALISBURY.

Each address was divided into two parts. On the third day they were given by different persons. In the Acts of Devotion it will be seen at what point in the Service each of these addresses was given.

On the first day the Moslem World report had been presented ; on the second, the African and Indian reports ; on the third, the Far East report. Certain words in the addresses, and some of the devotional exercises, were intended to express thoughts that had been suggested during the day.

There is a sequence of ideas in these addresses and acts of devotion. The first gives the vision of reality—the vision of God's purpose and love and of the suffering through which He executes His purpose. The second brings the great truth nearer to our own life, and shows the purpose of God manifested in these latter days—the day of the Lord crashing round us in the catastrophe of the war, but appealing to us now with the call of a great unprecedented opportunity. This brings the sense of personal obligation : “Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do ?” In the mouth of Saul of Tarsus these words betokened a capitulation.

THE PURPOSE OF GOD

E

INTRODUCTION

We are to meet with God, and hear what He has to say to our souls. We want to enter into His Presence, and to let Him speak ; and as a result of that contact we want to re-dedicate ourselves to His service, and to win a new vision of His Purpose. But that He may speak, we must be silent. A large part of the art of the spiritual life lies in knowing how to be silent before God.

Begin by being silent for two minutes, trying to realise God's Presence, trying to put yourself into an attitude of expectancy.

“ Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth.”

“ Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire ;
And lighten with celestial fire.”

I

THE PURPOSE OF GOD

A GREAT, redemptive purpose of love. That is our Christian background. Purpose is surely written large over the story

of our planet. We cannot help seeing purpose in the gradual evolution of the earth—stage leading on to stage ; each stage more rich than the last ; and all converging on man, on the production of persons, rational, moral, spiritual.

And then into the middle of human history comes the Perfect Person, to do two things : (a) to set the standard for the true growth of personality ; (b) to give men power to live up to that standard. In Jesus Christ—or nowhere—is to be found the meaning of our world. There, in Him, in His work, is the Purpose of God.

That purpose is twofold.

i. It is a purpose for each individual soul. The single soul is of infinite value in God's sight. God is love ; and love does not deal with the mass, but with the individual. It is selective, discriminative.

Are there masses of things anywhere ? No two shells, no two blades of grass, are alike. Uniqueness is stamped on nature. There is an ascending scale of individuality. God works like an artist. He cares for individuality, for the detail, and great and small have no meaning for Him.

Every human soul is made in His image, carries within him something of the divine. You and I and the savage in the dim forest, are each a unique child of the Father. And

His purpose for each is that each may know Him as Father and live as His true child.

As we think of that, we think of sin—what it must mean to God's heart of love ; how it thwarts His purpose. We think of sin—not in the abstract, not of other men's sins, but of our own sin. My sin, and God's love for me. My sin, which mars His purpose for me.

2. But God's purpose we look at in a larger way ; a purpose for the whole human race ; the purpose which St. Paul described as the summing up of all things in Christ. The execution of that purpose runs out beyond our earthly vision ; it embraces eternity as well as time. There is one vast fellowship or brotherhood of humanity. Christ is its Head. He waits to pour into humanity His redemptive power. He seeks to link all men with Himself. "I am come that they may have life." Think of how this purpose shaped itself in His mind. Think for a minute of three of the missionary visions which came to Him.

(a) "The devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain and sheweth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them. And he said unto Him, All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me." "All the kingdoms of the world." His rightful possession ; but

not to be won save by love's method and in accordance with His Father's will.

(b) "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold ; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice ; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd." He longs for the day when these other sheep shall make response in the words of the great Divine Pastoral, "The Lord is my shepherd, therefore can I lack nothing."

(c) "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself." Love's note of pain sounds here ; but love grows through pain. He saw His Cross as the magnet which would draw a sinful world to Himself.

II

THE EXECUTION OF THE DIVINE PURPOSE

GOD'S purpose can be carried out only through human instrumentality. It must be so, for it is a purpose connected with character and moral goodness, with the perfecting of personality. No one can be made good by force. Moral goodness consists in the free adoption by the will of the person of the higher in preference to the lower. Hence

God's purpose of the redemption of humanity can be carried out only by humanity. What is committed to us is a co-operative task. We and God are to work together for the execution of His purpose. "How shall they believe on Him whom they have not heard ? And how shall they hear without a preacher ? And how shall they preach, except they be sent ?"

I am sure that we need to revise the popular conception of Divine Omnipotence. Strictly taken, omnipotence means ability to do anything. But (1) there are many things God cannot do. He cannot convert a soul against that soul's will. (2) And sheer power is not a thought we can reasonably apply to God ; for God has character, and His purpose and activities flow from His nature. God's power is a power of love, and so is subject to the limitations which belong to love.

What are these limitations ?

(a) They are the limitations which we impose on God by our unfaith and sinning and apathy. It is we who hinder the execution of the Divine purpose. We cannot ultimately defeat it. In the long run God will win ; but we can and do thwart and delay the purpose. God has infinite reserves of power. He is longing to release them ; but He cannot do so, unless we are ready to open our lives to receive Him.

(b) And then love, because of its very nature, imposes a limitation on itself as regards its method. It can never use force ; but only appeal, persuasion, spiritual pressure. The omnipotence of God means that things cannot finally go wrong. But before the end is reached there may and will be much resistance to be overcome, much suffering on the part of God.

Now the point I would have us concentrate on is this : The cost to God of redeeming the world ; the pain of the divine love, wounded and stung by human sin. Philosophy has often been daring in its speculation. No more daring metaphysic has ever been given to the world than the Christian metaphysic. It may be summed up in a sentence—"I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheek to them that plucked off the hair." That is God ; that is God's life in relation to our world. He is the eternal Sufferer ; the eternal Cross-bearer. How patient He is ! His love endures all that human sin puts upon it, turns to its own use the very materials of opposition ; quietly pursues its path of pain, longing to see men come to a better mind.

You and I are part of the cost to God of redeeming the world. Sin is a missing of the mark. We miss the mark, and the arrow glances aside and pierces the divine heart. What am I costing God ? How tender His

love is ! How God is ready to welcome us back the moment we really want to make a new start ! " I will arise and go to my Father"—but the Father has already come to meet us. And so we are led to consider our relation to God's great purpose, so clear, surely, at this time, when the older order is passing away, and stagnant waters are moving, and incalculable possibilities for the future open out before our eyes : " Behold, I make all things new." That voice from the throne is echoing round the world. The Spirit of Christ is trying to press in through every channel of humanity's life.

Acts of Devotion

1. *Keep silence to realise the Divine Presence.*
2. *Meditate on the purpose of God.*

A redemptive purpose of love—individual and world-wide. Picture the three missionary visions of Christ, asking God to open your eyes (see p. 67).

3. *Acts of Prayer.*

For new visions of God's purpose.

That Christ uplifted on His Cross may draw many souls in heathen and Moslem lands to Himself.

(*Think of the vastness of the task ; see how easy to make mistakes, how easy not to take the long view.*)

That the Church may be given wisdom as she makes her plans for the extension of Christ's Kingdom.

4. *Meditate in silence on my relation to the execution of the divine purpose* (see p. 70).

5. *Examination, with brief periods of silence, on :*

(a) The hindrances in my own life to God working out His purpose for me.

(i) Prayerlessness, spelling powerlessness.

Have I learned to pray ?

(ii) Sin ; disloyalty to Christ and His standard.

(iii) Absence of eagerness ; of the keen spiritual will. Contentment with present achievement.

(b) My attitude to His purpose in its special missionary aspect at this time.

- (i) Am I really caring whether the present opportunity is seized or not ?
- (ii) Have I studied prayerfully and intelligently the present situation ?
- (iii) What is Christ calling me to do in this matter ?
 - Is He calling me to go out as a missionary ?
 - Is He calling me to do special work at home for the great cause of the extension of His Kingdom ?
- (iv) Am I keeping back a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, a friend, from going out ?
- (v) Have I seen the bigness of the thing ?
 - Have I seen Christ scarred, yet triumphant, in the middle of this whole situation which through His Spirit He Himself has brought about ?

6. Acts of Prayer.

That the Church may be led to respond to the great opportunity now open in Moslem lands, especially in Egypt, Persia, and Palestine.

That in Africa the growing Churches may become strong in the faith, and may become missionaries to their own Moslem people.

That God will abundantly bless the efforts to win the Moslem world through literature.

That doctors and teachers may be found to staff the Medical Missions among the Moslems.

7. Self-examination (with short silence after each question).

What is the measure of my sacrifice for Christ's cause ? He has done so much for me ; what am I doing for Him ?

When this Conference is over, what definite thing am I going to do as a result of it ?

What is my personal relation to Jesus Christ ? If I am not as eager as I ought to be over Christ's kingdom abroad, is it because Christ has not yet fully possessed me ?

My penitence, how deep does it go ?

The Holy Spirit, what do I know of His living power and guidance ?

8. *Prayer.*

Search me, O God, and know my heart ; try me and know my thoughts ; and see if there be any way of wickedness in me ; and lead me in the way everlasting.

We would confess before Thee, O Lord, our sins and shortcomings ; the wrong things done, the right things left undone ; our want of missionary zeal, our half-hearted service of Christ ; the selfishness that makes us shirk the burden ; the blindness which veils from our eyes the splendour of Thy loving purpose. O Lord, pardon what is past ; quicken the new resolves of this present hour ; and in the days to come lead us into greater self-sacrifice and consecration, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Pour out, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy Spirit upon Thy Church, that into all its members may come new vision, new life, new fellowship with Christ its living Head. Bless abundantly this Missionary Conference. Send us out, and through us send many another, to work for the extension of Thy Kingdom in lands where the people are sunk in darkness, yet are feeling after the light. Open our hearts that we may receive Thy Pentecostal Power. Open our eyes that we may see Christ with hands outstretched to bless. Do with us what Thou wilt, and as Thou wilt.

So shall the earth be filled with the knowledge
of Thyself, as the waters cover the sea. And to
Thee be the glory and the praise, now and for
evermore.

What great things God has done in the past !
What greater things He is going to do !

Praise the Lord ! for He is glorious ;
Never shall His promise fail.
God hath made His saints victorious,
Sin and death shall not prevail.
Praise the God of our salvation ;
Hosts on high, His power proclaim,
Heaven and earth and all creation
Laud and magnify His Name.

THE DAY OF THE LORD

INTRODUCTION

In the presence of God, Supreme, Mysterious, Awful. Of the Father, who made us, the Son who redeemed us, and the Holy Spirit who sanctifies us. Thank Him for bringing you to a time of revived hope for His Church in this land. Thank Him that He has chosen you out of all our country to pray and think out how to allow Him to use you for His purposes.

I

THE DAY OF THE LORD

“THE great day of the Lord is near. It is near and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord . . . a day of the trumpet.”—ZEPH. i. 14, 16.

We stand to-day at a turning point in the history of the world. Men of the generations to come will look back on these days as days of supreme importance for mankind. If for a moment we have to dwell in our thoughts

and prayers on the sadness and disillusionment which hung over us for ten years, it is only that these memories of gloom are a contrast with the mightier hopes which we believe are beginning to appear. We have passed through terrible days of God : “ Days of wrath, of trouble and distress, of wasteness and desolation, of clouds and thick darkness.”

These are beginnings. There are perils enough still, as we who labour for peace know well enough. But we believe that a new day of the Lord is dawning ; a day of vast opportunities ; filling our hearts with hope. The Spirit of the Lord is palpably moving among us.

So it is in the nations. And what of the Church ? Well, have we not cause to hope there also ? I know that there is a Church of God greater than the Church of England ; but we are members of the Anglican Communion, and that is our present concern. I venture to think that the English Church is only just coming to full stature. Not many years ago I used to think (perhaps faithlessly) that the English Church was the poorest, the most rent asunder, the most despised in Christendom. But I have lived to see this Church approached by almost all the great religious Christian bodies—even those which seemed the most unlikely of all. And for what ? To see whether roads

towards reunion can be found. This is not a fond imagination ; it is a historical fact.

And what about our relations with one another inside the Church of England ? We are frequently told that the Church of England cannot hold together ; we are pointed to the controversies of the day, and told that there are bad times coming. Do not believe it. I know perfectly well that principle cannot be settled by mere sentiment. But here we are, gathered together from all parts of the British Isles, and representing many differing ways of thinking. We are up against the very biggest things. God has thrust upon us a tremendous responsibility ; we kneel all together desiring one thing, the spread of the Kingdom of God on earth. Surely we are not going to be permanently divided when we are all set upon so great a work ?

God, who brings good out of evil, has brought us into a new world through the war ; and He has brought about also a new spirit of love in the Church.

But there is one thing more. It is a day of fear as well as of hope. The Days of the Lord are always like that. And we have to face the question whether we are big enough for it all. I have been studying the Reports which have come to us from other parts of the world. They are like trumpets ; shame and fear and hope are mingled as we read, and wonder

whether we can possibly meet the challenge they contain. They are very calm ; there is nothing exaggerated about them, nothing hysterical. They just state certain facts for our serious consideration. And God has sent them to us. He has chosen us to proclaim to the Church the urgent need for a vast increase of our duty in this generation. Are we sufficient for these things ?

II

WHO CAN BUT PROPHESY ?

“ **T**H E lion hath roared, who will not fear ?
The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy ? ”

The *Times* of January 27,* in a leading article said, speaking of the World Call to the Church : “ These are days of unprecedented opportunity. . . . Christians who believe that their faith makes for men’s highest welfare will see in the present conditions of their fellow-men a challenge to prepare themselves for new efforts.” So we are not wild enthusiasts, suggesting to ourselves, because we want it, that we have a valid ground of hope. No ; the leading English newspaper agrees with us and cheers us on. Referring to India as

* 1926.

an illustration the *Times* says, “ In India the educated classes are influenced by Christianity. . . . As for the outcastes, the problem is not so much to gain their adherence to Christianity—as to find a sufficient number of teachers to instruct those who desire to accept it.”

Indeed, if ever the Lord God spoke, He speaks to-day. If it were only in the world movements of which we have been thinking it would be clear enough. If it were only that in the Church at home we see signs of quickened life, we should have enough to think about. But it is far more than that ; we hear now, as we never heard them before, voices calling to us in a thousand tongues to make God known. For many centuries the Church has sent forth her missions into heathen lands ; we are all familiar with missionary magazines ; we have heard with mild resignation and languid interest the annual missionary sermons. Who does not remember how often he has come home in the evening and found *Central Africa* or what not on the hall table, has picked it up, looked at the pictures, read a word or two here and there, and has put it down again for some keener person to study, or dropped it carelessly into the waste-paper basket ? It has got to be different now. We have found out that it is not a matter of introducing

Christianity to utterly ignorant heathen, who have never heard the Gospel, and perhaps would not much care whether they hear it or not. No doubt there are plenty of these still. But we know now that there are multitudes of men and women in the world holding out their hands in supplication to us, beseeching us to teach them. We read how in India a group of men come to the Christian priest's house, and, kneeling with their foreheads on the ground, say, "O teacher, we are men without wisdom, we have come to see you to learn about God." We read of another missionary receiving a deputation from a meeting of three thousand men who had determined to place themselves under instruction, and who came to ask for teachers. That was years ago, and no one has gone to them yet ; there is no one to send. The Report comments, "That experience might be multiplied many times over. In many districts it happens almost every day."

It is impossible for us to be as we were. The Lord God hath spoken. Who can but prophesy ? We must read the Reports, if we have not yet read them ; and when we have mastered the tremendous facts presented to us we shall have clear knowledge of the call of God.

The Church is alive as she has not been for many generations. God speaks to us in the

fullness of time. He has waited until we were ready to hear Him.

We often wonder whether there is going to be a revival of religion here in England. The signs are puzzling. Certainly there are movements to encourage us. There is a wider inclination to take Christianity seriously, especially among the young. There is more prayer, and a greater desire to pray intelligently, and to consider carefully the claims of our Lord. But it does not look as if there were to be in England any immediate and signal revival on a large scale. I may be wrong, for God can do anything. But it seems more probable that God waits until we have begun to get to work. It may be that we in England will never regain the grand strength of early days until the fullness of the nations be come in. Over there in Africa, India, the Far East, in the Moslem lands, there are the multitudes waiting and longing for the good news ; and we without them cannot be made perfect. We must first give to them out of the rich store of our ancient tradition. We must send them priests and prophets. But they will richly repay our generosity. When the young, vigorous Churches of those far-away lands shall have grown to maturity they will bring back to us that fire of the Spirit which will kindle a flame like nothing since Pentecost.

Who can but prophesy? God has spoken to us here in England in unmistakable tones. But such a call of God, coming as it does, lays upon us a terrible responsibility. We have been told to pray for fear. We need hardly pray for it; it comes unsought. To every one of us there is a question, the cry of St. Paul. It is not the same in detail for each of us, but to all it comes. "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

"I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what He will say unto me, and what I shall answer."

Acts of Devotion

1. *Keep silence to realise the Divine Presence.*

O Almighty God, we believe that Thou art here present; help us to remember Thy Presence. Thou knowest all things; Thou readest all our hearts, and understandest all our thoughts. There is nothing in us but Thou, O Lord, knowest it altogether. Help us in the prayers we are about to offer for Thy Whole Church, that what we ask may be according to Thy will, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

O God, Almighty Father, we humbly beseech Thy divine Majesty, that as Thou didst strengthen Thine apostles on the Day of Pentecost by the visitation of Thy Holy Spirit, so Thou wilt deign to enlighten and guard our minds and hearts by His Presence at this time, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

2. *Meditate on the signs of the times.*

The catastrophe of the war—the first disappointment of the peace.

Then a fresh stirring in the minds of men, feeling after God. A clearer desire for the coming of His Kingdom.

The opportunity set before us (see p. 81).

3. *Acts of Thanksgiving to God.*

For the dawning of His new day of hope.

For the Presence of His Spirit moving among us to fire us with a fresh desire for the spread of His Kingdom.

For showing us the longings of so many in Africa and India for the good news of Jesus Christ.

4. Acts of Prayer.

(a) Carry the mind from here to Africa ; try to realise that our Lord is there, working, teaching, converting.

Pray for all in Africa who are waiting patiently for some one who will teach them the way of Christ.

Pray for those who have gone from this country already to serve God and their brethren in Africa.

Pray that we may not lose this great opportunity to win Africa for our Lord.

(b) Think of our neglect of the opportunities that God gives us in India :

Ask God's pardon.

Think that we do not send young men and young women in answer to the call from India :

Humble ourselves before God.

(c) Pray for the Church here in England, and thank God for the new vision that has come to us.

Beg Him to give a glorious future to His Church, that she may do all possible to fulfil His holy will.

Pray for the peace and unity which are according to His will.

Pray for an evergrowing fellowship of prayer throughout the Church.

Pray that our view of the Kingdom of God may be always increasing in understanding.

O God, Who dost teach Thy Church by the power of the Holy Spirit, stir up and confirm Thy grace in the hearts of each of us Thy servants ; that being mercifully delivered from all weakness and indecision we may be strong to accomplish the work which Thou hast given us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

5. Meditate on the Voice of God to-day.

“The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?” (see p. 84).

6. Thanksgivings.

For the call that God has given in these days, after long preparation.

For the revival of prayer and hope in the Church at home.

For the fuller knowledge that He is giving of the needs of His people in far-off lands.

That He leaves us in no doubt of the urgency of the call.

7. Acts of prayer.

That the Church at home may be inspired to make every year the great provision in men and money needed to meet the call from Africa and India.

For the encouragement of our friends who are teaching in those lands.

That God will support them in trial, loneliness and disappointment.

8. Self-examination.

“Lord, what wilt Thou have *me* to do?”

“I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what He will say unto me, and what I shall answer.”

Pray that when His will is made known we may rise and obey.

Pray that small difficulties or great sacrifices may not daunt us.

O everlasting God, Who art ever adored by the holy Angels, yet dost choose men to be the stewards of Thy mysteries, vouchsafe evermore to dwell in the hearts of us Thy servants.

Inspire us with Thy purity, strengthen us with Thy might ; make us perfect in Thy ways ; guide us into Thy truth ; and unite us to Thyself and to Thy whole Church by Thy holy mysteries ; that we may conquer every adverse power, and may be wholly devoted to Thy service, and conformed to Thy will, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

O Almighty Father, Whose blessed Spirit doth in every age and place transform and revive the souls of men ; pour down upon us abundantly the same Holy Spirit, that we may henceforth glorify Thee in newness of life and fervour of love, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

LORD, WHAT WILT THOU
HAVE ME TO DO?

INTRODUCTION

The hour of supreme opportunity has struck. Not since Jesus spoke to Paul on the Damascus road and claimed him for a world-wide mission to the nations and to kings in the critical hour when Europe was accessible, when the great Empire of Rome had created its empire-wide communication roads before its dying faiths let in its ruinous and desolating invaders, not since and not then has a waiting and a willing world flung so wide its doors that Christ's men may enter and show them Jesus.

We are living in the day of the Lord. His mind is declared ; His will is known. When the mind and will of God are known, it is because He is present. This is the true "parousia." Maranatha ; the Lord is at hand. You are a band of men whose hearts God has touched. You care. You can be trusted with the message of God to the Church ; not as isolated units, but as broken fragments of His great Society you hear His call to-day. Ye are the Body of Christ and members in particular ; but if it is the Church that hears,

the responsibility is not the less for each of us. Rather the honour of Christ's Body is in our separate keeping.

I

THE PRESENCE OF JESUS

THE day of necessity and opportunity can never take God at a disadvantage. They are indeed His days. Somewhere there is waiting the instrument by which His will is to be done. While the preparation of the world for Christ at His Incarnation went on in the large movements of history, with rise and fall of kings, of thinkers and philosophies, one young Jew watches the remarkable dying of another, and things are happening in his mind which presently as he rides to Damascus break on his spiritual consciousness with the explosive shock of new conviction. He discovers that the Crucified of Calvary is not dead but alive ; alive and claiming his entire life service. That great event and the decision which followed it changed the course of world history, and more than anything led to the conversion of the Western world to Christ. The awakening of a single soul to the presence of the living Jesus Christ can have tremendous consequences.

But there needed yet another element, a humbler instrument than the great man Paul. There was living in Damascus an obscure Jew, Ananias by name. He has heard of the threatened visit of the distinguished Saul, Commissioner and Inquisitor of the High Priest, has heard and trembled. Heard, too, of the divine intervention outside the city gate, of the fall from the horse, of the blindness yonder where he lay in the Street called Straight. "Go to him," said the inward voice, "Lay hands on him and heal his blindness." That was no rare thing at the beginning. Then tell him the truth of what happened on the road.

So, taking his courage in both hands, he went, climbed the stair, knocked at the door. "Brother Saul"—this to the persecutor!—"The Lord, even Jesus, Whom thou sawest in the way, hath sent me."

I do not want to exaggerate the share of Ananias in the great conversion. Without the tremendous mystical experience on the way Ananias would have been nothing; but coming when he came, as Paul was wrestling with his vision, the vision that asked of him the wreck and ruin of all his hopes in life for the sake of this peasant prophet, knowing in himself the reality of his challenging experience, yet—who can doubt it?—tempted to deny it, that coming of Ananias, straight

from Jesus, may have turned the last hesitancy into decisive victory.

Somewhere, who can say where, God may have His Paul, His Francis, His Xavier, called for this great hour. In England, may be, or Japan or China, somewhere a Gandhi all for Christ, somewhere, in many a place, man after man, woman after woman, to fill the hundred posts that are waiting. What He needs to-day is that His call may be delivered and His message carried by simple people like ourselves. It is ours to tell His tale to our own Church, in diocese, deanery and parish.

One will, one mind, one faith unite us at this hour. That faith is in Jesus, Whom with one mind we confess the only Light of this world's darkness. One will to be the servants of His will.

But when these conditions of unity are fulfilled, another great fact emerges. We reach the sources of almighty power; we touch the actual presence of the Spirit of Jesus. This is no fancy and no metaphor. It is His most grave and solemn promise. "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them by My Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them."

Sometimes we need to guard ourselves against a slavish literalism in our reading of His words. Here we cannot take too literally, or too simply, His tremendous pledge. Jesus is to be trusted. All that we need is spiritual imagination to realise it, a heightened spiritual consciousness to perceive it.

What changed the world for St. Paul was such quickened perception. Aware first of the blinding light above the noonday sun, he awakes to discover a living presence, Jesus, the Lord, invading and filling his entire consciousness. "I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest. Arise, and it shall be told thee what thou must do."

II

"LORD, WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME TO DO?"

IN the mouth of Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus road these words were not a mere question. They betokened a capitulation. They carried with them the complete surrender of the aims, the preconceived notions, the habitual public attitude of a

lifetime. No wonder Saul spake trembling and astonished and with his face to the ground.

We, too, in some sense have made our surrender. Again and again, a thousand times before this week, we have sought to offer ourselves in heart and will. At every Communion we have offered and presented ourselves, our souls and bodies. But now we seem to know more of God's need of us. We have learned something of the hunger of His desire for us as fellow-workers with Himself ; and moreover, we have heard the call of our times. We would offer ourselves without reserve.

But how ? Let us think over the implications of dedication to God and His World call. What will self-offering involve ?

(1) There will be resolutions about prayer —for a fuller and more faithful system of intercession.

There is special need to-day of that characteristic spirit of the first days which is called in the New Testament "Parrhesia." That Greek word is translated "boldness" ; but it means more than that. It betokens a burning confidence of faith which refuses to be restrained, which makes a man ready to say anything and do anything in order to share his overwhelming discovery with his fellow-men. The Church to-day is not cer-

tain enough of her Faith. We believe indeed, but we do not believe with that burning confidence which overcomes the world. We read of crowded meetings at Oxford to listen to a leading spiritualist, or of Christian Scientist Churches being built at vast expense, or of people casting about for a faith, wondering what to believe. There is much hesitation and bewilderment everywhere. Would this situation prevail if the Church were really more sure of her Creed? if we were all full of the glory of the daily discovery of Jesus Christ?

There is only one way of dealing with the situation. It will not be by violent assertions, still less by impatient attacks. We must overcome by the overwhelming certainty of our Faith; and that comes only by prayer. Why should not every week, every day, be just a fresh and glorious adventure, a thrilling experience of the living presence and action of the Spirit of Jesus? "Why could not we cast him out?" asked the apostles of old. And we ask it too as we contemplate the unbelief of our day, the besetting sins entrenched in society, the false teaching of our educated men. And the same answer comes, "This kind cometh not forth but by prayer."

(2) There will be resolutions to be made about study. Our object is to make ourselves

experts ; and this will mean something more than the mere perusal of the Reports as a pastime. We must master our subject with self-denying labour in order that we may bear the facts really upon our mind, together with the solicitude which knowledge of the facts is sure to bring.

And not only so. We are called to make a real study of the actual problems which are incidental to the great world developments. These problems demand the best brains and the fullest knowledge of the facts that our Church can give, and the solution of them is not easy. You cannot approach even the fringe of the great Colour question with its manifold variations without seeing that we shall reach sound decisions only through conscientious and detailed study of the facts. There are so many things to consider ; and you cannot solve the problems of human life by the mere quotation of Christian aphorisms. And the same is true about the development of the child races, and native labour, the formidable opium traffic, and the principles of education in Africa and Asia. The Church must think these problems through and have a clear and final message as to the Christian view ; and although we shall look to the leadership of the clearest minds among us for direction, yet after all the motive force of public opinion comes from the

rank and file, when they understand the situation.

(3) The need of moral witness. Sooner or later in the study of these world problems courage will be wanted to bear witness for the Christian view. When all precautions have been taken to master the facts, and to be fair all round, a clash with worldly opinion will inevitably come sooner or later. In every region where the moral witness of the Church is required there will be found vested interests defending the abuses, and sometimes we shall have to stem the current of public opinion setting strongly in the wrong direction. We must examine ourselves as to the call of moral witness. "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light. What ye hear in the ear that preach ye upon the housetops."

(4) Above all there is the question of personal service. Ought I to offer myself? What does offering mean? It means the offer of a life, a career to be lived among non-Christians in such wise that they "see Jesus" in a human life—however imperfectly. And let us count the cost. Going abroad inevitably means a great rent in the family relations. Not indeed a failing of love—that need never be; indeed love is definitely increased where a member of the family offers for the mission field. But it is undoubtedly true that if you

go abroad for more than five years, there is the loss of the family life so far as its companionship and happy daily intercourse are concerned. It means that brothers and sisters are lost to one another in that sense, and that when they meet on furlough the son may return almost a stranger to his father, a brother to his brother. There is a sacrifice involved ; and that is why the Master has left with us that striking and emphatic promise—

“ There is no man that hath left house or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My sake and the Gospel’s, but he shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, house and brethren and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions ; and in the world to come eternal life.”

There is another obligation, perhaps even more difficult than this. It may be that you are not called to go yourself ; but have you counted the cost of calling upon others to go ? We are to bear witness to the call of the non-Christian world to the Church. In other words we are to support the great call for recruits. But how can I call for recruits ? How can I go to others, and ask them to do what I am not doing myself ? How can I ask mothers and fathers to give up their sons and daughters, young men and women to give up their home life and home career for a life of

sacrifice abroad? You cannot do it unless your own life is right. But if you have wrestled the whole thing out for yourself, and know that God bids you stay at home, if you are bravely standing up to your duty here and bearing the Cross according to God's will as it is shaped for you in your life, then it is your duty to speak to others, and you will be a coward if you don't. The Cross can be quite heavy enough here at home, and you will speak with power to others just in so far as you are able to speak out of the experience of the Cross.

These are some of the implications of self-offering

Acts of Devotion

1. *Keep silence to realise the Divine Presence.*

Invoke the Holy Spirit of God—"Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire." Great ideas succeed each other ; we call down the Celestial Fire—the sevenfold gifts—the everlasting light ; the flame of love—grace abounding—protection from the enemy—sure guidance—inward peace ; here is a prayer that can never be offered in vain.

2. *Meditate on the conversion of St. Paul.*

The world preparation for Christ in the large movements of history, and the shock of new conviction to one man. The awakening of that single soul to the presence of the living Jesus changed the history of Europe.

The humble service of Ananias may have turned the last hesitancy into decisive victory.

The presence of the Spirit of Jesus is a solemn promise, and Jesus is to be trusted (see p. 96).

3. *Silence.*

It is the surest and most direct road to His Presence. Let the thought of His nearness possess you. Cast loose the moorings which tie us to this shore of earth. Put out across the bar that guards the harbour mouth into the sea of His infinite Presence. Let the soul float free in the ocean of God. In this silence, in this life which is nearer than breathing, hold together the world need as now we know it, and God's supply of light in which is no darkness at all, of love which is inexhaustible. And

at last present to Him your Church, your soul,
to be the instrument of His will.

The call of the world, and Jesus its answer.

4. *Consider the implications of our self-offering.*

“Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?”
(see p. 99).

(a) *The call abroad.*

“I heard the voice of the Lord God saying,
Whom shall I send? and who will go for us?”
Lord, here am I—dost Thou call me?

Show me, O Lord, and give me strength.

(b) *The call to prayer.*

Am I called to more systematic intercession?
More earnest wrestling in prayer?
More struggling for a sense of His Presence?
Have I refused that wrestling with the angel?
What resolutions concerning prayer is God
asking of me?

Show me, O Lord, and give me strength.

(c) *God is calling me to moral witness.*

Have I shown cowardice?
Have I tried to please the world?
Have I shirked taking my stand on thorny
questions?

Show me, O Lord, and give me strength.

(d) *Is God bidding me to take up any definite
question and to make a study of it?*

Have I been too indulgent in the past to study
seriously?

Show me, O Lord, and give me strength.

(e) *Is there sacrifice in my life?*

Is there sacrifice enough in me to qualify me
to call for sacrifice in others?

Is there self-indulgence ? Self-pleasing ?
 Too much comfort and ease ?
 Show me, O Lord, and give me strength.

5. Three Resolutions.

(1) Led as I believe by the Spirit, I resolve to join in this movement of prayer for a revival of the spiritual life in the Church of England, and to give the subject a definite place daily in my prayer. (*See note on page 61.*)

(2) Believing that God seeks for my personal service, I hold myself bound to study the facts and the moral issues presented by the world situation of our time, that I may be reasonably equipped as a witness for Jesus Christ.

(3) Trusting only to His Grace, I offer myself, my mind, heart and will in God's service for the extension and establishment of His kingdom upon earth.

6. Prayer.

Almighty God, Who through Thine only-begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life ; We humbly beseech Thee, that, as by Thy special grace preventing us Thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by Thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect ; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end.

Teach us, good Lord, to serve Thee as Thou deservest ;
 To give and not to count the cost ;
 To fight and not to heed the wounds ;
 To toil and not to seek for rest ;
 To labour and not to ask for any reward,
 Save that of knowing that we do Thy will,
 O Lord, our God. Amen.

The following prayer has been approved by the Bishop of Salisbury for use by those who wish to have a collect for the World Call of St. Paulstide.

O Lord God of our fathers, Who in the days of old didst show Thy power through the triumphs of the Gospel, we thank Thee for the manifestation of Thy Presence in our own days ; and we pray that by the guidance of Thy Holy Spirit we may not hinder the fulfilment of Thy purpose, but by prayer, by witness, and by the offering of our lives, we may promote Thy glory and the establishment of Thy Kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

NOTE.—*These hymns were used :*

ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

<i>Tuesday.</i>	<i>Opening hymn, E.H. 375.</i>
	<i>Before the second address, A. & M. 439.</i>
<i>Wednesday.</i>	<i>After five minutes' silence, A. & M. 160.</i>
	<i>Before the second address, E.H. 504.</i>
<i>Thursday.</i>	<i>After an earnest invocation of the Holy Spirit, A. & M. 157 (kneeling).</i>
	<i>Before the second address, A. & M. 192.</i>
	<i>Before the three resolutions, E.H. 504.</i>

WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

<i>Tuesday.</i>	<i>After a short silence, A. & M. 220,</i>
	<i>Before the second address, A. & M. 172.</i>
<i>Wednesday.</i>	<i>After a short Act of the Presence of God, and a silence for five minutes, E.H. 375.</i>
	<i>Before the second address, A. & M. 192.</i>

Thursday. *After an earnest invocation of
the Holy Spirit, A. & M.
157 (kneeling).*

*Before the second address, A. &
M. 403.*

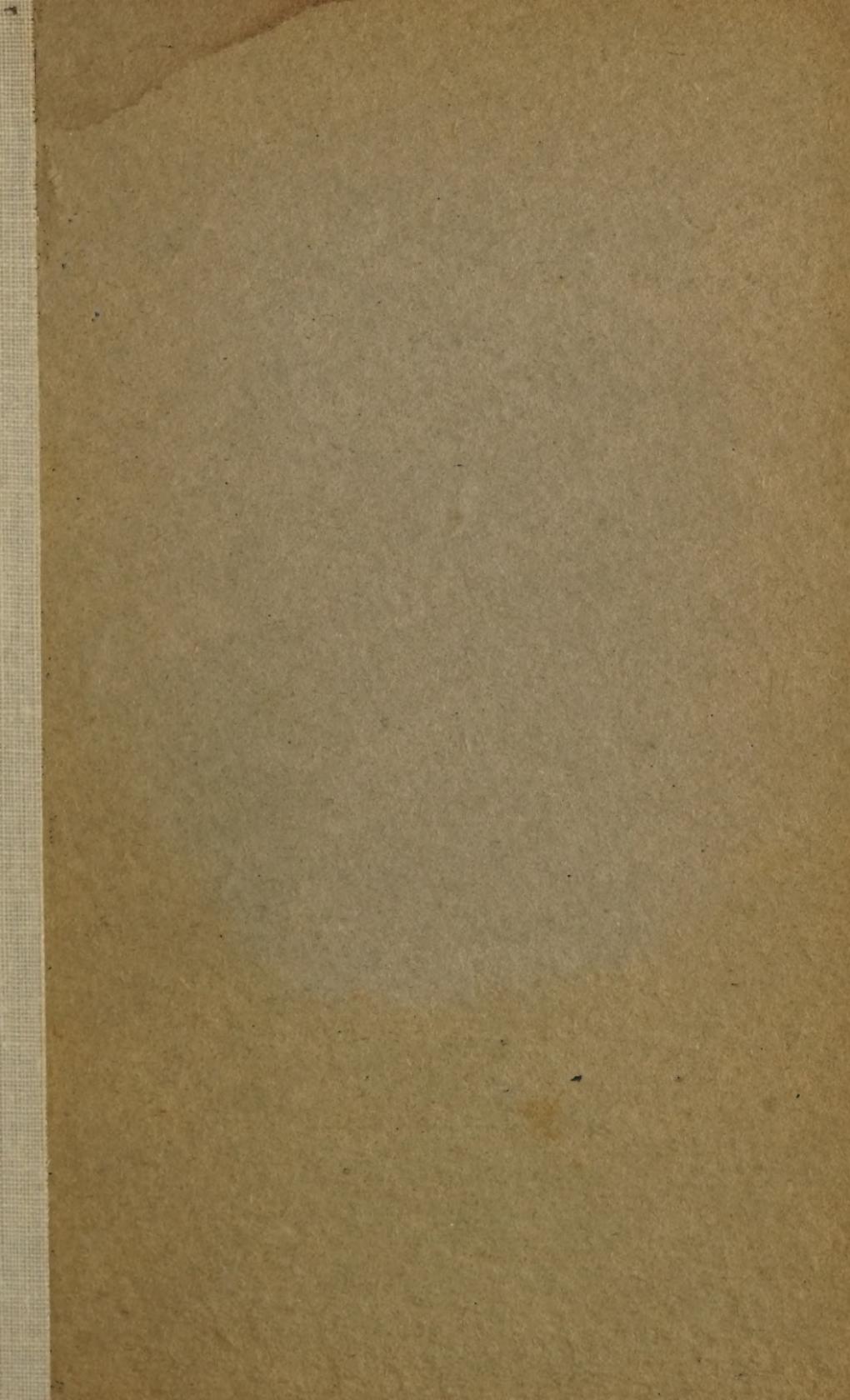
*Before the three resolutions,
E.H. 504.*

(Permission was obtained to print such hymns
as are copyright.)

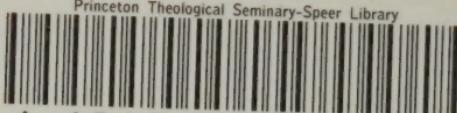
Sometimes the congregation dispersed in
silence, and on other occasions the service ended
with the Blessing.







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